

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Presently Amended) A method for controlling pectin esterase activity in a pectin containing plant starting material wherein said plant starting material is a fruit starting material before extraction of pectin from said pectin containing plant starting material comprising the steps of: obtaining a pectin containing plant starting material, contacting said pectin containing plant starting material with an acidified water having a pH of ~~between~~ about 3.2 ~~[[--]]~~ to about 3.9 at a temperature of $\leq 70^{\circ}\text{C}$ and recovering a treated pectin containing plant starting material.
2. (Presently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the acidified water has a pH of ~~between~~ about 3.4 ~~[[--]]~~ to about 3.7.
3. (Presently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the acidified water is acidified using an inorganic or organic acid.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the acidified water is acidified using an inorganic acid selected from hydrochloric acid, sulfuric acid, sulfur dioxide, and nitric acid.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the acidified water is acidified using an organic acid selected from the group consisting of citric acid, oxalic acid and acetic acid.
6. (Presently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the acidified water is acidified using a buffer system being capable of maintaining the pH of the acidified water within the range of ~~between~~ about 3.2 to ~~[[--]]~~ about 3.9.

7. (Presently Amended) The method of claim 5, wherein the buffer solution is capable of maintaining the pH of the acidified water within the range of ~~between~~ about 3.4 [[-]] to about 3.7.

8. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the buffering system is selected from the group comprising hydrochloric acid/ disodium hydrogen-citrate, glycine/hydrochloric acid, potassium hydrogen phthalate/ hydrochloric acid, citric acid/sodium citrate, and sodium acetate/ acetic acid.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said pectin containing plant starting material is contacted with an acidified water at a temperature of $\leq 50^{\circ}\text{C}$.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein said pectin containing plant starting material is contacted with an acidified water at a temperature of $\leq 30^{\circ}\text{C}$.

11. (Presently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~claims 1-10~~, further comprising the step of drying the treated pectin containing pectin containing plant starting material to produce a dried treated pectin containing pectin containing plant starting material.

12. (Presently Amended) The method according to claim 1 ~~claims 1-11~~, wherein the pectin containing plant starting material is selected from the group consisting of citrus fruits and apples.

13. (Presently Amended) The method according to claim 1 ~~claims 1-12~~, wherein the pectin containing plant starting material comprises citrus fruits.

14. (Original) The method according to claim 13, wherein the pectin containing plant starting material comprises orange.

15. (Original) The method according to claim 12, wherein the pectin containing plant starting material comprises apples.

16. (Presently Amended) A treated pectin containing plant starting material made according to claim 1 ~~claims 1-15~~ for use in extraction of pectin.

17. (Presently Amended) The treated pectin containing plant starting material of claim 16, wherein the treated pectin containing plant starting material exhibits a pH of below about 4.5 when extracted with deionized water.

18. (Presently Amended) The treated pectin containing plant starting material of claim 17, wherein the treated pectin containing plant starting material exhibits a pH of below about 4.0 when extracted with deionized water.

19. (Presently Amended) The treated pectin containing plant starting material of claim 18, wherein the treated pectin containing plant starting material exhibits a pH of between about 4.0 and about 3.5 when extracted with deionized water.

20. (Original) The treated pectin containing plant starting material of claim 16, wherein the treated pectin containing plant starting material comprises citrus peel.

21. (Original) The treated pectin containing plant starting material of claim 20, wherein the treated pectin containing plant starting material comprises dried citrus peel.

22. (Original) The treated pectin containing plant starting material of claim 21, wherein the treated pectin containing plant starting material comprises dried orange peel.

23. (Presently Amended) A treated pectin containing plant starting material made according to claim 1 ~~claims 1-15~~ for use as animal feed.

24. (Presently Amended) A treated pectin containing plant starting material made according to claim 1 ~~claims 1-15~~ for use as an ingredient in foodstuffs.

25. (Presently Amended) A pectin, characterized by the molecular weight of said pectin being up to 50% higher than the molecular weight of a pectin obtained from extracting a similar but non-treated pectin containing plant starting material, obtainable by extraction from a pectin containing plant starting material treated by the method according to claim 1 ~~claims 1-15~~.

26. (Presently Amended) The pectin according to claim 25, characterized by the molecular weight of said pectin being about 10 ~~[[--]]~~ to about 40% higher than the molecular weight of a pectin obtained from extracting a similar but non treated pectin containing plant starting material.

27. (Presently Amended) The pectin according to claim 26, characterized by the molecular weight of said pectin being about 15 ~~[[--]]~~ to about 30% higher than the molecular weight of a pectin obtained from extracting a similar but non treated pectin containing plant starting material.

28. (Presently Amended) A pectin, characterized by a ratio between the calcium sensitivity of said pectin and the calcium sensitivity of a pectin extracted from a similar, but non-treated washed pectin containing plant starting material in the range 0.90 – 1.40, obtainable by extraction from a pectin containing plant starting material treated by the method according to claim 1 ~~claims 1-15~~.

29. (Presently Amended) The pectin according to claim 28, characterized by a ratio between the calcium sensitivity of said pectin and the calcium sensitivity of a pectin extracted from a similar, but non-treated pectin containing plant starting material in the range of about 0.90 ~~[[--]]~~ about 1.20.

30. (Presently Amended) The pectin according to claim 29, characterized by a ratio between the calcium sensitivity of said pectin and the calcium sensitivity of a pectin extracted from a similar, but non-treated pectin containing plant starting material in the range of about 0.90 ~~[[--]]~~ about 1.20.